

Press Release

HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Department of Community Services



PUBLIC SAFETY

"Ensuring a Safe
Harford"

EDUCATION

"Preparing Now,
Building for the Future"

EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT

"Governing Smarter"

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

"Growing and Sustaining
Harford's Prosperity"

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

"Protecting Our
Environment"

QUALITY LIVING

"Safeguarding What is
Important to Harford
County Citizens"

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As Gas Prices Increase, Harford Commuter Assistance Rideshare Offers Free Options for Drivers

(Bel Air, MD) - - Commuting to work is an everyday occurrence for tens of thousands of Harford Countians, who drive in all directions to and from places of employment. While many residents live and work within a few miles of their job, many other residents travel much longer distances to get to work with many making daily commutes to Philadelphia or Washington, DC.

As the price of gas continues to rise, commuters are finding themselves in the position of possibly not being able to afford to get to work. Fortunately, Harford County's Department of Community Services has a great program that offers information on how to find alternative ways to get to work.

Harford Commuter Assistance Rideshare works to find ways for drivers to save on their commutes, and best of all the information is free. "It is getting busier every day as our call volume keeps increasing and more and more people are interested in finding other ways to get to work" says Alan Doran, Rideshare Coordinator for Harford County.

According to Doran, two of the easiest ways to alternative commute are carpools and vanpools with carpools typically being from two to six persons and vanpools accommodating from seven to fifteen people. "These two areas are both the most effective and convenient ways to help cut travel time, costs, reduce congestion, and lower frustration," says Doran.

The goal of the Harford Commuter Assistance Rideshare is to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles or SOV's on the county's busy roadways. To achieve this goal, the program advertizes in various local publications on the radio, visits local businesses, and reaches out to groups such as boards, community organizations, and local associations. Doran encourages the county's larger companies to encourage employee commuting as both parties can benefit from tax incentives set up to entice alternative commuting choices.

The Rideshare office also keeps in contact with commuters through its toll-free number, website, and email. The program works to make as much information available as possible on its website with recent information being posted online about the Hatem Bridge toll increases and Route 40/715 interchange roadwork.

(more)

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The Rideshare program, which participates in the Commuter Connections program, which in itself is part of a regional network of transportation organizations coordinated by the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, uses a regional database that contains thousands of area commuters and helps them find ridesharing partners with commutes similar to theirs. Commuters simply sign up to the program and enter their information into the database. The program then matches the commuter to those with similar needs and transportation patterns.

Harford Commuter Assistance Rideshare also offers information on public transit with many residents using either the Harford Transit Link Bus Line or the Maryland Transit Administration's MARC Train or local Commuter Bus lines. Harford Transit link covers the southern end of Harford County and recently started their new Teal Line connecting Harford and Cecil Counties.

MARC offers rail service from Perryville to Union Station in Washington, DC with local stops at Aberdeen and Edgewood. The commuter bus lines include the 410 which travels from Churchville to Baltimore, the 411 from Hickory to Baltimore, and the 420 with service from Havre de Grace to Baltimore. Doran also says many northern Harford County residents travel to Hunt Valley and pick up the MTA's Light Rail to points south.

Many commuters were once concerned about what could happen when an emergency situation arrived beyond their control. Recently added to the Rideshare program's offerings is the Guaranteed Ride Home Program, where commuters who walk, bike, carpool, vanpool, or use mass transit at least two days per week are guaranteed a ride home, in the event of an emergency, up to four times per year. Doran encourages all commuters using alternative forms of transportation to sign up for this program on the Commuter Connections website.

Harford Commuter Assistance Rideshare is a smart way to share your ride and your expenses. Sharing a ride can be cheaper and faster than driving alone, and a convenient car or vanpool can get you where you are going faster. It's also a great way to help eliminate traffic congestion and pollution.

For more information about Harford Commuter Assistance Rideshare and commuting alternatives contact Alan Doran, Rideshare Coordinator, at 1-800-924-8646 or asdoran@harfordcountymd.gov. The program also has a website available at www.harfordcountymd.gov/commuter. Harford Commuter Assistance Rideshare – Smart for Your Wallet, Smart for Your World.